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6 From beef to beans: Eating motives and the replacement of animal proteins with plant proteins
7 among Finnish consumers
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- 15 • Motives related to dietary change towards plant proteins were examined
- 16 • Six clusters with different beef, beans, and soy product use patterns were found
- 17 • Natural, health, and weight concerns were the main motives in a dietary change
- 18 • Convenience and price motives are barriers to substituting beef with plant proteins
- 19 • Social motives were high among those undergoing a dietary change

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22 **ABSTRACT**

23 A better understanding of the motives underlying the adoption of sustainable and healthy diets is
24 needed for designing more effective policies. The aim of the study was to examine how eating
25 motives were associated with self-reported changes in the consumption of beef, beans, and soy
26 products, i.e., changes related to reducing animal and increasing plant proteins. The study analysed
27 a survey of an adult population living in Finland ($N = 1,048$). The eating motives were measured
28 with the Eating Motivation Survey (TEMS), which distinguishes between 15 eating motives. Six
29 clusters of consumers based on self-reported changes in food choices were identified with latent
30 class analysis (LCA). Four clusters had established food consumption patterns (“Beef only”, “Beef
31 and beans”, “Beef, beans, and soy products”, and “No beef”), one was undergoing a change, and
32 one had attempted a change earlier. ANOVA with planned contrasts revealed that the motives
33 relating to natural concerns, health, and weight control were higher, and convenience and price
34 lower, among those who had an established diet including beans and soy products, as compared to
35 those who consumed only beef. Those undergoing a dietary change expressed a higher endorsement
36 of natural concerns as well as health, sociability, social image, and price motives than those with an
37 established diet including beans and soy products. The results suggest that eating motives play an
38 important role in changing towards more sustainable food consumption patterns in which meat/beef
39 is replaced with plant proteins.

40

41 *Keywords:* motivation, food choice, consumers, sustainable food consumption, vegetable proteins

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44 *Highlights:*

- 45 • Motives related to dietary change towards plant proteins were examined
- 46 • Six clusters with different beef, beans, and soy product use patterns were found
- 47 • Natural, health, and weight concerns were the main motives in a dietary change
- 48 • Convenience and price motives are barriers to substituting beef with plant proteins
- 49 • Social motives were high among those undergoing a dietary change

50

51 **Introduction**

52 It has been widely accepted that food consumption patterns have significant impacts
53 on human health and the environment. Recent discussions on the sustainability of food production
54 and consumption have increasingly paid attention to the role of products of animal origin in causing
55 environmentally hazardous effects, particularly in terms of climate change (Fiala, 2008; Popp,
56 Lotze-Campen, & Bodirsky, 2010; Stehfest *et al.*, 2009; York & Gossard, 2004). It has been
57 estimated that substituting meat with plant proteins would significantly reduce the costs of climate
58 change mitigation (Stehfest *et al.*, 2009) and would reduce cancer risk associated with the
59 consumption of red meat and processed meat (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2013; World Cancer
60 Research Fund, 2013).

61 The consumption of meat has steadily increased in Western countries during the past
62 decades (Vinnari & Tapio, 2009; Natural Resources Institute Finland, 2013), whereas that of plant
63 proteins has been stable (de Boer, Helms, & Aiking, 2006). In Finland, meat maintains a central
64 position in meals and food purchases (Vinnari, Mustonen & Räsänen, 2010), as is the case in other
65 European countries. However, social and cultural factors may complicate efforts to diminish meat
66 use, as meat is culturally embedded in Western food cultures as the centre of the meal (Fiddes,
67 2004). Consumers also value the taste of meat, and many consider it as a healthy and necessary part
68 of the diet (Verbeke *et al.* 2010).

69 The most fundamental motivation for eating is hunger, but how and what we choose
70 to eat is determined by other factors (Lowe & Levine, 2005). Previous dietary research has
71 examined how behavioural change is associated with habit, motivation, goals, beliefs about own
72 capabilities, and knowledge (Guillaumie, Godin, & Vézina-Im, 2010), as well as attitudes, social
73 norms, self-efficacy, and intention (Rothman, Sheeran & Wood, 2009). However, few studies exist
74 on the association between eating motives and changes in food choices, particularly regarding the
75 transition from meat-based diets to more sustainable eating practices. There is some evidence of

76 personal motives helping in changing one's food habits. The replacement of animal proteins with
77 plant proteins requires replacing undesired behaviours with new ones, which has been found to be
78 more demanding than initiating new behaviour because motives associated with undesired
79 behaviour may function as barriers (Holland, Aarts, & Langendam, 2006). In such cases, triggering
80 personally relevant motivational cues has been found to be more effective than external situational
81 cues (Adriaanse, de Ridder, & de Wit, 2009).

82 On one hand, individuals describing their diet as low in red meat have been found to
83 attribute greater importance to health, natural content, weight control and ethical concerns in their
84 food choice as compared to those who describe their diets as conventional, whereas vegetarians
85 have been found to differ significantly from those describing their diets as conventional only with
86 regard to ethical concerns (Pollard, Steptoe & Wardle, 1998). The reasons for adopting a meat-free
87 diet have been found to be associated with health concerns, weight control, animal welfare, and a
88 sense of disgust related to meat (Smith, Burke, & Wing, 2000).

89 On the other hand, price, taste and convenience have been found to act as barriers to
90 consuming healthy food (Lappalainen *et al.*, 1997). More specifically, the less healthy dietary
91 habits among individuals belonging to low socio-economic status (SES) groups are in part
92 attributable to the higher priority given to price and familiarity and the lower priority given to health
93 motives (Konttinen *et al.*, 2012). In another study, price was perceived as being the most important
94 barrier to climate-friendly food choices but was only weakly associated with actual food choices;
95 instead, the omission of climate-friendly choices was most strongly explained by habit and disbelief
96 in the effects of food consumption on the climate (Mäkinen & Vainio, 2014).

97 Previous research suggests that dietary change can be divided into different stages and
98 that different automatic and reflective components are involved in these stages. There is evidence
99 that the reflective processes are important in initiating of new behaviours, but also that the
100 maintenance of dietary choices involves the formation of habits that are automatic processes

101 operating beyond individuals' full awareness. (Rothman *et al.*, 2009.) Therefore habits are likely to
102 persist even after conscious motivation decreases (Gardner, de Bruijin, & Lally, 2011). The
103 Transtheoretical Model of behavioural change (TTM; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984; Rossi *et al.*,
104 2001) suggests that a desired change in behaviour is associated with an increase in awareness of and
105 concern about an issue, as well as with an increase in the perceived importance of positive motives
106 and a decrease in that of negative ones (Freestone & Goldrick, 2007). It has been suggested that
107 repetition is important for habit formation, leading to automaticity characterized by efficiency, lack
108 of awareness, unintentionality and uncontrollability (Bargh, 1994). There is considerable variation
109 in the time taken to replace old habits with new ones, which depends on the complexity of
110 behaviours. For example, Lally *et al.* (2010) found that the average of time required was 66 days
111 but the range varied from 18 to 254.

112 In this article we examine how eating motives are associated with dietary changes
113 related to reducing animal and increasing plant proteins. We focus on self-reported changes in the
114 consumption of beef, beans, and soy products. We assumed that differences in eating motives
115 would be associated with differences in the participants' diets, and that the endorsement of
116 reflective motives, such as healthiness and natural concerns, would be stronger among those who
117 are currently adopting plant proteins in in their diets as compared to those who have established
118 plant protein consumption. Based on the results we will suggest how policy-makers can take into
119 account the association between eating motives and dietary change in developing new policy
120 measures. Next, we review previous research on eating motives, as well as the consumption of beef
121 and animal proteins, before turning to our empirical analysis and results.

122

123 *Eating motives*

124 The current study uses The Eating Motivation Survey (TEMS), which is based on a
125 review of eleven previous measures of eating/food choice motives (Renner *et al.*, 2012). TEMS

126 identifies 15 different motivations for food choices: liking the food, visual appeal, pleasure, affect
127 regulation, need/hunger, sociability, social norms, social image, weight control, health, price,
128 convenience, habits, traditional eating, and concern for nature. As a result, TEMS brings together
129 previously developed measures allowing for a fine-grained and multifaceted characterization of
130 motives associated with food choice. Research using TEMS has found that Liking, Habits,
131 Need/Hunger, and Health motivate eating behaviour most often (Renner *et al.*, 2012). There is some
132 evidence that motives associated with health may be universal core motives of food choice that
133 have been identified in several previous studies and measures of eating motives (Steptoe *et al.*,
134 1995; Lindeman & Stark, 1999; Schupp & Renner, 2011b). It also appears that health and ethical
135 considerations are an important part of reflective consumer practices (Hjelmar, 2011).

136

137 *Meat and plant protein consumption in Finland*

138 In Finland, average per capita meat consumption – consisting almost exclusively of
139 pork, beef, and poultry – is slightly below the EU average, but there has been a steady increase
140 (Lihatiedotus, 2015). Research indicates a socio-demographic variation in the consumption of meat.
141 A survey of the health and dietary habits of 15–64-year-old Finns revealed that 43% of the
142 population had eaten meat on three or more days during the week preceding the survey (Helldán *et*
143 *al.*, 2013). One in ten respondents had not eaten meat at all. The frequency of meat consumption
144 decreased with age, and men ate meat more frequently than women. The consumption frequencies
145 also indicated that men with a higher educational level ate meat more often than less-educated men,
146 whereas for women the opposite was found.

147 Beans have been a part of European diets for centuries (Cubero, 2011; Shurtleff &
148 Aoyagi, 2013). In Finland, broad beans have been cultivated since the 15th century, and have been
149 commonly used for bean soup, for example. Peas, too, have been cultivated and consumed in
150 Finland for centuries and are still currently used as a side dish or as the main ingredient in

151 traditional pea soup. Other beans or lentils have not been a part of traditional Finnish cuisine or
152 mainstream food culture. Lately, soy products have been introduced on the Finnish market. A study
153 conducted in Finland (Jallinoja *et al*, in press) has shown that Finns eat pulses infrequently. Peas
154 were the most frequently used pulses, whereas soy milk products and other soy products were used
155 the least. More than a half of the respondents never consumed soy products. All pulse foods were
156 consumed much more frequently among vegetarians compared to non-vegetarians. The
157 consumption of plant proteins appeared to increase, as frequent bean consumers also ate other plant
158 proteins often. The study by Jallinoja *et al* (in press) suggests that frequent pulse eating is largely a
159 vegetarian practice in Finland. Indeed, vegetarianism is still a small-scale phenomenon in Finland,
160 with about 4% of the population being vegetarians (Official Statistics of Finland, 2012). The
161 proportion has remained approximately the same since the mid-1980s (Vinnari *et al.*, 2010.)

162

163 *Hypotheses*

164 In this study we examined how eating motives were associated with stability and
165 changes in food consumption patterns relating to animal and plant proteins. Among the various
166 animal proteins we focused on beef, because it is often considered to be the most problematic type
167 of meat in terms of health and environmental effects. Of the plant proteins we chose to analyse
168 beans (i.e., canned or dried beans) and soy products, because both are readily available in
169 supermarkets and are promoted as more environmentally friendly and healthy alternatives to animal
170 protein. We tested the hypothesis that the eating motives of consumers who are undergoing a
171 change in food consumption patterns differ from consumers with established diets. Based on
172 previous research we assumed that a set of motivational drivers (Health, Natural Concerns, and
173 Weight Control) facilitate dietary change, whereas other motives (Price, Convenience and Habit)
174 function as barriers to changing to plant proteins.

175 We developed more specific hypotheses after identifying the consumer groups. First,
176 based on previous studies, we expected Health, Natural Concerns and Weight Control motives to be
177 higher, and Habit, Price and Convenience to be lower, among those consumers who include beans
178 and soy products in their diet as compared to those who only consume beef (H1) (e.g., Konttinen *et*
179 *al.*, 2012; Lappalainen *et al.*, 1997; Mäkinieimi & Vainio, 2014; Pollard, Steptoe, & Wardle, 1998;).
180 Second, we expected Health, Natural Concerns and Weight Control motives to be higher, and Habit,
181 Convenience and Price to be lower, among those undergoing a dietary change towards beans and
182 soy products than among those with an established diet including beans and soy products (H2)
183 (Rothman *et al.*, 2009). Third, we expected that those with a previous dietary attempt to consume
184 beans and soy products would endorse higher levels of Habit, Price and Convenience as compared
185 to those whose established diet included beans and soy products (H3) (Konttinen *et al.*, 2012;
186 Lappalainen *et al.*, 1997; Mäkinieimi & Vainio, 2014). In order to examine whether other motives –
187 the role of which remains unclear according to earlier research – are also significant in the
188 transformation from animal to plant protein, we kept the whole set of the TEMS motives in the
189 analysis.

190

191 **Materials and methods**

192 *Data sample*

193 The data were collected through an online questionnaire with one reminder, directed
194 to the members of a consumer panel by a commercial marketing research company, representative
195 of 15–63-year-old Internet users living in Finland.⁵ Of the contacted consumers, 16% completed the
196 questionnaire, yielding 1,048 complete answers. Such a response rate can be regarded as fairly
197 common in internet surveys, where response rates are typically below 25% (see e.g., Dillman *et al.*,

⁵ In 2011, approx. 85% of Finnish households had Internet connection and 89% of Finns between 16 and 74 years of age had used the Internet during the last three months. Those between 16 and 54 years of age used the Internet most frequently (SVT, 2011).

2009). As consumers are frequently asked to answer email questionnaires, it was expected that many would ignore the solicitation.

Table 1. Age, gender distribution, highest education level, and living area in the Finnish population (Official Statistics of Finland, 2012) and in the data sample.

	Finnish population %	Data sample %	
Age			
15–24 years	19	19	
25–44 years	38	38	
45–64 years	43	43	
Gender			
male	49	42	
female	51	58	
Highest education			
Basic level ^a	25	24	
Secondary level ^b	44	19	
Tertiary level ^c	31	57 ^d	
Region			
Helsinki-Uusimaa	30	29	
Southern Finland	22	23	
Western Finland	25	25	
Northern and Eastern Finland	24	22	

Notes. ^a Certificates from primary schools, middle schools and comprehensive schools; ^b matriculation examinations, vocational qualifications; ^c polytechnic degrees, lower and higher university degrees; ^d including diplomas in Business and Administration no longer in use in official statistics.

The mean age of the participants was very close to that of the general population (Table 1). Women were slightly over-represented in the data compared to population statistics. The respondents were somewhat better educated than the overall population; however, this difference may have resulted in part from the slightly different classifications used between Statistics Finland

227 and those used in this survey. Moreover, 6.7% of the participants were vegetarians as compared to
228 4.2% of the Finnish population (Official Statistics of Finland, 2012). All in all, apart from the level
229 of education, the discrepancies between the data and population statistics are small enough to
230 conclude that the data are reasonably representative of the Finnish population. Unweighted data
231 were used to test the hypotheses.

232

233 *Measures*

234 The analysed variables were part of a longer questionnaire. We included the items
235 measuring eating motives (TEMS scale, Renner *et al.*, 2012), self-reported past and planned
236 changes in consumption of beef, bean and soy products, and socio-demographic variables.

237 *TEMS scale.* We used a brief version of TEMS including 45 items where three items
238 measured each eating motive. The participants were requested to indicate, on a 7-point scale (1=
239 “never applies”, 7 = “applies always”), how relevant the eating motives were to explaining why
240 they consumed the food that they did. The English version of TEMS was translated into the Finnish
241 language by two researchers. The Finnish translation was compared to the original German version
242 by a researcher who was bilingual in Finnish and German. The Finnish translation was a pilot tested
243 qualitatively, allowing the participants to freely comment on the items. Based on the discussions,
244 two items measuring Sociability (“because it is social” and “so that I can spend time with other
245 people”) were replaced with the items “because other people eat it” and “because it is pleasant to
246 eat with others”. The revised version was tested on a targeted sample of potential pulse consumers.

247 *Changes in food consumption patterns.* The participants were requested to indicate
248 how their consumption of three food items – beef, beans and soy products – had changed during
249 the previous 2–3 years on a four-point scale (1 = “no consumption”, 2 = “consumption has
250 decreased”, 3 = “consumption has remained stable”, 4 = “consumption has increased”). Each food
251 item was measured separately. The participants were then requested to indicate how they expected

252 their consumption of these three food items would change in the coming 2–3 years on the same 4-
253 point scale. These time frames were chosen because we wanted the respondents to reflect on their
254 eating patterns a few years earlier and to speculate about the future, without asking them to identify
255 exact times, which would probably have been difficult to remember or anticipate. We also included
256 the participants' self-reported consumption of poultry and fish in the analysis as background
257 variables.

258 Moreover, the participants were requested to indicate their gender, age, highest level
259 of education (recoded into 1 = no professional degree, 3 = university degree), and the size of their
260 place of residence (1 = more than 100,000 inhabitants, 2 = at least 15,000 inhabitants, 3 = less than
261 15,000 inhabitants).

262 The participants were requested to indicate whether they followed a special diet
263 (vegetarian, vegan, low carbohydrate, low salt, gluten-free, low lactose, food allergy elimination
264 diet, or other). The responses were recoded into two categories: "no special diet" and "special diet".
265

266 *Statistical methods*

267 The reliability of the TEMS scale including 15 factors was verified with confirmatory
268 factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS version 21.0 (Arbuckle, 2011). *CFA* assesses the fit of a
269 measurement model (the associations of the scale items to their designated latent variables) and a
270 structural model (the associations between latent variables). Several fit indices were used to assess
271 the goodness of fit of the model. The χ^2/df index ≤ 3 (Carmines & McIver, 1981), the *CFI* index \geq
272 .95 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980), and the *RMSEA* index $\leq .05$ (Browne & Cudeck, 1993) indicate an
273 excellent fit. Indices based on χ^2 were interpreted with caution. This is because with large samples,
274 even small failures in the model will be highly significant.

275 Latent class analysis (LCA) with Latent Gold 4.5 was used to form consumer clusters
276 based on participants' self-reported consumption of beef, beans, and soy products. *LCA* identifies

unobservable clusters of individuals based on patterns in the observed variables (Magdison & Vermut, 2002). Alternative models ranging from a model with one class to a model with eight classes were estimated. With 6 nominal indicators the data is likely to be sparse, and in such cases the L^2 statistic does not follow a chi-squared distribution (Magdison & Vermut, 2004). In such cases it is recommended to use the BIC value to compare the models. The model with the lowest BIC value was a 6-class model, and this was chosen for further analysis ($BIC = 10,940$, $AIC = 10,380$, $N_{par} = 113$, $L^2 = 1107.264$, $df = 935$, $p = 7.90E-05$).

Socio-demographic variables and the self-reported consumption of poultry and fish were used in the LCA model as inactive covariates, meaning that their effect was not included in the estimation of the model but that they provided useful descriptive information on the cluster members and their dietary changes. ANOVA was used to compare eating motives between the clusters, and the mean scores for the eating motives were used. We also took into account that these variables were normally distributed and that none of the assumptions of the one-way ANOVA were violated. Three sets of planned contrasts were conducted to examine the relationships between eating motives and food consumption patterns. The first set of contrasts was conducted between the clusters including those who consumed only beef vs. those including both beans and soy products in their diets (H1). The second set of contrasts was conducted between the clusters representing an established consumption of both beans and soy products vs. ongoing dietary change (H2). The third set of contrasts was conducted between the clusters representing an established consumption of both beans and soy products vs. a past (but failed) dietary attempt to consume beans or soy products (H3).

Results

Validity of the TEMS scale

301 The CFA model exhibited an excellent fit with the data sample ($\chi^2 = 2,414.666^{***}$,
302 $df = 840$, $\chi^2/df = 2.875$, $CFI = .929$, $RMSEA = .042$). Factor loading $\geq .30$ (Kline, 2011) and
303 Cronbach's alpha $\geq .60$ were used as a cut-off for high construct validity. All factor loadings were
304 high, and the Cronbach's alpha was in the acceptable range for all factors. Bivariate correlations $<$
305 $.80$ were used as a cut-off for satisfactory discriminant validity (Brown, 2006). All bivariate
306 correlations were below $.80$ (Table 2). The results confirm the overall validity of TEMS for the
307 Finnish sample.

308

309 *Clusters based on changes in the consumption of beef, beans, and/or soy products*

310 Six consumer clusters were identified based on past changes and future intentions
311 regarding the consumption of three food items: beef, beans, and soy products. The 6-cluster LCA
312 model provided diverse cluster sizes varying from 7.5% to 25.4% (Table 3). The R^2 values indicated
313 that the proportion of variance explained by the 6-class model was highest for the future
314 consumption intentions for soy products.

315 Clusters no. 1, 2, 3, and 6 were interpreted as representing established food
316 consumption patterns. The first cluster was the largest, including those who consumed beef and who
317 did not consume beans or soy products ("Only beef"). The second cluster included consumers of
318 both beef and beans, but not soy products ("Beef and beans"). The third cluster included
319 participants who consumed beef, beans and soy products ("Beef, beans and soy products"). The
320 sixth cluster of participants had a stable past consumption of both beans and soy products and no
321 consumption of beef ("No beef"). All clusters reported that their consumption patterns would
322 remain the same in the future.

323 **Table 3.** Clusters based on self-reported changes in the consumption of beef, beans, and/or soy products (values are percentages).

	Established diet				Ongoing dietary change towards plant proteins	Past dietary attempt towards plant proteins	Wald	p-value	R ²
	Beef only	Beef and beans	Beef, beans and soy products	No beef					
	Cluster size %	25.4	23.2	23.0	7.5	12.1	8.9		
	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 6	Cluster 4	Cluster 5			
Past change: beef							121.14	0.000	0.31
No consumption	0.03	0.00	0.01	1.00	0.00	0.00			
Consumption has decreased	0.14	0.25	0.13	0.00	0.74	0.36			
Consumption has remained stable	0.76	0.67	0.81	0.00	0.19	0.54			
Consumption has increased	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.00	0.07	0.10			
Past change: beans							144.36	0.000	0.48
No consumption	1.00	0.01	0.14	0.08	0.01	0.54			
Consumption has decreased	0.00	0.09	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.29			
Consumption has remained stable	0.00	0.74	0.76	0.54	0.39	0.15			
Consumption has increased	0.00	0.15	0.07	0.37	0.60	0.02			
Past change: soy products							155.34	0.000	0.43
No consumption	1.00	0.99	0.35	0.09	0.10	0.43			
Consumption has decreased	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.34			
Consumption has remained stable	0.00	0.01	0.56	0.55	0.43	0.12			
Consumption has increased	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.31	0.41	0.10			
Future consumption: beef							139.81	0.000	0.36
No consumption	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.99	0.00	0.01			
Consumption will decrease	0.12	0.22	0.09	0.00	0.70	0.24			
Consumption will remain stable	0.83	0.74	0.90	0.00	0.30	0.68			
Consumption will increase	0.03	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.06			
Future consumption: beans							249.71	0.000	0.52
No consumption	0.92	0.03	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.21			
Consumption will decrease	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.09			
Consumption will remain stable	0.03	0.77	0.95	0.61	0.28	0.46			
Consumption will increase	0.05	0.17	0.05	0.35	0.71	0.24			
Future consumption: soy products							165.34	0.000	0.70
No consumption	0.98	0.98	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.05			
Consumption will decrease	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.21			
Consumption will remain stable	0.00	0.00	0.97	0.68	0.45	0.49			
Consumption will increase	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.28	0.54	0.25			

324 The fourth cluster was interpreted as being at the middle of an ongoing change
325 towards plant proteins. The participants had already reduced their consumption of beef and
326 increased their consumption of both beans and soy products (“Ongoing dietary change towards
327 plant proteins”). Moreover, they had intentions to decrease their consumption of beef and increase
328 their consumption of beans and soy products.

329 The fifth cluster was interpreted as representing past attempts to consume beans and
330 soy products. It included participants who either did not consume beans or soy products or had
331 reduced their consumption of beans and soy products (“Past dietary attempt towards plant
332 proteins”). In this cluster, the consumption of beef, beans, and soy products was most likely to
333 remain the same in the future.

334 The items measuring poultry and fish consumption were used as inactive covariates in
335 the analysis and for interpreting dietary changes in the clusters (Table 4). The participants
336 belonging to the first three clusters (“Beef only”, “Beef and beans”, and “Beef, beans, and soy
337 products”) had stable past consumption of poultry and fish, and this trend was seen as remaining
338 stable in the future. The fourth cluster (“Ongoing dietary change towards plant proteins”) had a
339 diffuse consumption trend towards poultry. In this cluster, the past consumption of fish was either
340 stable or had increased, and was likely to increase in the future. Participants in the fifth cluster
341 (“Past dietary attempt towards plant proteins”) consumed poultry and fish regularly and had
342 intentions to increase their fish consumption. The participants in the sixth cluster (“No beef”) most
343 likely did not consume poultry and consumed fish regularly.

Table 4. Sociodemographic characteristics and dietary patterns associated with the clusters (%).

	Established diet				Ongoing dietary change towards plant proteins	Past dietary attempt towards plant proteins
	Beef only	Beef and beans	Beef, beans and soy products	No beef		
Gender						
female	54	55	48	86	70	64
male	46	45	52	14	30	36
Age group						
15–24 years	15	17	16	27	29	24
25–34 years	18	21	18	38	28	18
35–49 years	27	30	35	22	24	29
50–64 years	40	31	31	13	18	28
Level of education						
no professional degree	22	23	22	23	28	32
vocational degree	27	16	16	14	16	21
university degree	52	60	62	63	56	48
Place of residence						
at least 100,000 inhabitants	34	45	47	65	56	52
at least 15,000 inhabitants	43	42	39	26	34	36
under 15,000 inhabitants	23	13	14	9	11	12
Diet						
Does not follow a specific diet	74	72	73	10	64	63
Follows a specific diet	26	28	27	90	36	37
Past change: poultry						
No consumption	2	1	1	67	6	1
Consumption has decreased	5	5	10	12	27	15
Consumption has remained stable	66	57	65	15	39	52
Consumption has increased	27	37	24	6	27	32
Past change: fish						
No consumption	7	2	4	27	3	5
Consumption has decreased	9	10	8	12	9	12
Consumption has remained stable	57	52	61	42	39	45
Consumption has increased	27	36	27	19	49	38
Future consumption: poultry						
No consumption	2	1	1	65	5	1
Consumption will decrease	3	7	5	13	38	9
Consumption will remain stable	86	82	88	19	44	74
Consumption will increase	9	10	6	2	12	15
Future consumption: fish						
No consumption	6	3	2	30	2	4
Consumption will decrease	0	2	1	10	7	4
Consumption will remain stable	68	62	73	51	31	44
Consumption will increase	26	33	24	9	59	49

374 **Table 5.** ANOVA with planned contrasts where an established diet including beef only (a), ongoing dietary change toward the replacement of
375 meat with beans and soy products (c), and past dietary change (d) were compared to an established diet including beans and soy products (b).
376

	(a) Beef only		(b) Established beans & soy products consumption		(c) Ongoing dietary change		(d) Past dietary attempt		Contrast (a) vs. (b)	Contrast (c) vs. (b)	Contrast (d) vs.(b)
Group size %	25.4		23.0		12.1		8.9				
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F(1,598)	F(1,457)	F(1,409)
Liking	5.41	0.85	5.40	0.79	5.51	0.74	5.54	0.92	0.01	1.83	1.93
Habits	4.84	0.88	4.77	0.78	4.83	0.81	4.92	0.95	1.11	0.56	2.05
Need & hunger	5.01	0.97	4.88	0.96	5.06	0.97	4.91	1.05	2.60	3.20	0.07
Health	4.25	1.24	4.62	1.04	4.85	1.17	4.67	1.19	16.69*** (a<b)	4.13* (b<c)	0.10
Convenience	4.72	0.98	4.48	0.97	4.48	0.99	4.53	0.84	8.73** (a>b)	0.00	0.16
Pleasure	3.95	1.04	4.00	0.98	4.13	0.99	4.01	1.14	0.35	1.71	0.02
Traditional eating	3.77	1.06	3.66	0.95	3.77	0.89	3.74	1.02	1.83	1.25	0.50
Natural concerns	3.18	1.29	3.80	1.28	4.14	1.34	3.69	1.35	34.16*** (a<b)	6.18* (b<c)	0.46
Sociability	3.51	1.16	3.50	1.08	3.77	1.01	3.65	1.21	0.01	6.14* (b<c)	1.15
Price	4.27	1.10	4.07	1.14	4.37	1.06	4.39	1.13	4.62* (a>b)	6.51* (b<c)	5.00* (b<d)
Visual appeal	2.68	1.04	2.76	1.03	2.75	0.92	2.86	1.15	.95	0.02	0.56
Weight control	3.15	1.34	3.37	1.26	3.39	1.27	3.49	1.23	4.22* (a<b)	0.02	0.58
Affect regulation	1.95	1.00	2.08	1.06	2.17	1.10	2.16	1.08	2.47	0.68	0.35
Social norms	2.47	1.06	2.60	0.95	2.59	1.02	2.62	1.14	2.45	0.01	0.04
Social image	1.97	0.89	2.11	0.90	2.30	0.84	2.12	0.99	3.19	4.66* (b<c)	0.02

377 ANOVA with planned contrasts between the mean of each cluster and that of other
378 clusters was used to compare socio-demographic characteristics and self-reported diet. The
379 following statistically significant differences were found. Relatively more males emerged in the
380 three clusters representing a stable consumption of beef, beans and/or soy products, and relatively
381 more females in the “no beef” cluster. The participants in the three clusters representing stable
382 consumption of beef, beans and/or soy products were relatively older, whereas the “no beef” cluster
383 and those undergoing a dietary change towards plant proteins were relatively younger than other
384 participants. Those undergoing a dietary change towards plant proteins were somewhat more likely
385 than others to have a low level of education than other participants. Participants consuming only
386 beef were more likely to live in small towns or in the countryside whereas the “no beef” cluster was
387 more likely to live in the larger cities. Moreover, this cluster reported a greater likelihood of
388 adhering to a special diet (most often vegetarian or vegan).

389

390 *Hypothesis testing: Planned contrasts*

391 ANOVA with three sets of planned contrasts were conducted to test the research
392 hypotheses. The first set of planned contrasts was conducted between those whose diets included
393 both beans and soy products (clusters 3 and 6) vs. the cluster consuming only beef (cluster 1). Five
394 statistically significant differences emerged (Table 5). The participants whose diets included beans
395 and soy products endorsed higher levels of Natural Concerns, Health, and Weight Control than
396 those who consumed only beef. Moreover, the participants whose diets included beans and soy
397 products endorsed lower levels of Convenience and Price than those who consumed only beef.
398 There was no difference in Habit between the groups, thus confirming Hypothesis 1 in five of the
399 six hypothesized differences in eating motives.

400 The second set of planned contrasts was conducted between the cluster representing
401 ongoing change (cluster 4) vs. the clusters representing established diets including beans and soy

402 products (clusters 3 and 6). Five statistically significant differences emerged. The participants
403 undergoing a dietary change endorsed higher levels of Natural Concerns, Health, Sociability, Social
404 Image and Price than those with an established diet including beans and soy products. Concerning
405 Health and Natural Concerns, Hypothesis 2 was confirmed. However, the difference in Price was
406 contrary to what was hypothesized. Moreover, Sociability and Social Image were not included in
407 Hypothesis 2, but turned out to play a role in dietary changes towards plant proteins.

408 The third set of planned contrasts was conducted between the cluster representing a
409 past attempt to consume beans and soy products (cluster 5) vs. the clusters representing established
410 diets including beans and soy products (clusters 3 and 6). One statistically significant difference
411 emerged. The participants with a past dietary attempt endorsed a higher level of Price as compared
412 to those with an established diet. There was no difference in Habit and Convenience between the
413 groups and therefore Hypothesis 3 was partially confirmed.

414

415 **Discussion**

416 In this article we tested the assumption that changes in diet regarding animal and plant
417 proteins are associated with differences in eating motives. We found evidence of some eating
418 motives being positively related to dietary change towards the replacement of animal proteins with
419 plant proteins, whereas other motives could be interpreted as barriers to change. The participants
420 whose diets included beans and soy products endorsed a higher level of natural concerns, health,
421 and weight control motives and a lower level of convenience and price motives than those who did
422 not consume beans and soy products. Moreover, participants who were undergoing a dietary change
423 towards the consumption of plant proteins endorsed a higher level of natural concerns, as well as
424 health, sociability, social image, and price motives than those with an established diet including
425 beans and soy products. On the other hand, those with a past dietary attempt endorsed a higher level
426 of price motive than those with an established diet.

427 These findings suggest that natural concerns, as well as health and weight control
428 motives are important for adopting and maintaining potentially more sustainable and healthier diets
429 (e.g., Carlsson-Kanayama & González, 2009; Godfray *et al.*, 2010; World Cancer Research Fund,
430 2013; Nordic Council of Ministers, 2012). This is in line with previous findings suggesting that
431 these three motives represent higher-order core motives (Renner *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, it appears
432 that the endorsement of the core motives of health and natural concerns is even higher among
433 consumers undergoing dietary change as compared to those with an established diet with beans and
434 soy products, suggesting that these motives may function as a motivational force during dietary
435 change.

436 Moreover, we found evidence that convenience and price motives function as barriers
437 to substituting meat with plant proteins. These motives were higher among those who consumed
438 only beef as compared to those with an established diet including beans and soy products.
439 Surprisingly, the price motive was higher among those undergoing a dietary change towards
440 increased use of beans and soy products, as compared to those with an established diet including
441 beans and soy products. It is possible that price is one motive for replacing meat with vegetable
442 proteins because in Finland beans and soy products usually cost less than meat. It is also possible
443 that those who replace beef with beans and soy products constantly compare price differences
444 between various products and therefore are likely to pay more attention to price during periods of
445 dietary transition. In contrast, those with an established diet including plant proteins do not actively
446 think about the price difference between the products as they are already used to buying and using
447 plant protein products. These findings are in line with previous findings indicating that the
448 importance of motives related to old habits is associated with perceived difficulty in changing one's
449 food habits (Freestone & Goldrick, 2007; see also Prochaska & DiClemente, 1984; Rossi *et al.*,
450 2001).

451 The level of social motives – sociability and social image – was high among the
452 consumers undergoing a dietary change, suggesting that the social context is important when
453 adopting new dietary patterns. Strong and supportive social networks have been found to explain
454 successful dietary change (Sorensen *et al.*, 2007). However, social motives are not necessarily
455 associated with the consumption of bean and soy products in particular. It is possible that people
456 who are undergoing a dietary change are more prone to mirror their choices to other people and the
457 communities around them, and reflect on how their new diet is impacting their social identities and
458 their “fitting in”.

459 In this article we have suggested that eating motives are associated with changes in
460 diets. However, it is possible that eating motives are, in fact, relatively stable. For instance, those
461 who have heightened concerns over health and weight may also be interested in, and trying, various
462 diets that might enhance their health and help in weight management, and their motives may not
463 necessarily change even though their practices do. This may be the case, for instance, for followers
464 of fad diets, such as a low-carbohydrate diet, who are more likely to regard health and weight-
465 managing aspects of foods as important and place less value on the sociability and pleasures
466 connected to food (Jallinoja et al. 2014).

467 *Limitations.* The study was based on an analysis of cross-sectional data, and the causal
468 relationships between eating motives and food consumption patterns remain mainly hypothetical.
469 Opposite causal associations between eating motives and changes in food choices could also be
470 possible. Therefore, longitudinal and experimental studies are needed to better understand the
471 causal mechanisms between eating motives and food consumption patterns. Moreover, the study did
472 not explore the issue of how long it takes to break old food habits and form new ones. There is a
473 need for research focusing on the process of habit development, and, in particular, how motives are
474 associated with different phases of the process. Related to this, more research is necessary to
475 identify whether and how food choice motives change at different phases of dietary change from

476 animal to plant protein, and, if this is the case, how eating motives can be effectively influenced.
477 Moreover, the study analysed self-reported behaviour that is subject to social desirability bias,
478 meaning that the participants might have exaggerated the frequency of socially desirable behaviour
479 (Chung & Monroe, 2003). For example, if the participants did not consume beans and/or soy
480 products regularly but perceived it as desirable behaviour, they might have been likely to respond as
481 intending to increase their consumption. However, this tendency is weaker in online studies than
482 face-to-face interviews. Previous research has also shown that food consumption patterns are
483 habitual, and therefore individuals are not necessarily fully aware of the motives associated with
484 their food choices and consequently make *post hoc* justifications for their habits (Köster, 2009;
485 van't Riet, Sijtsema, Dagevos, & De Bruijn, 2011; Mäkinen & Vainio, 2014; Wood & Neal,
486 2009). However, the infrequent consumption of pulses in the data (Jallinoja *et al*, in press) suggests
487 that the majority of Finns do not feel social pressure to report frequent consumption of beans or soy
488 products. Moreover, although the TEMS scale is relatively new, it is possible that it does not
489 sufficiently take into account pro-environmental or ethical motives that have been found to be
490 important in explaining environmentally sustainable food choices (Honkanen, Verplanken, &
491 Olsen, 2006; de Boer, Schösler, & Boersema, 2013). The respondents having polytechnic, lower
492 and upper academic degrees were overrepresented in the data, which must be taken into account
493 when generalizing the findings to the Finnish population.

494 Despite these limitations, we suggest our results are useful for understanding how to
495 influence the sustainability of food choices via policy measures. First, close to a quarter of the
496 respondents consumed beef and no beans or soy products, nor did they have intentions to change
497 their patterns. Effecting a transformation from animal to plant proteins in this group may prove
498 difficult. Policy measures appealing to health, natural concerns and weight control are not likely to
499 be effective in this group either. However, the group could benefit from new food products in which
500 meat has been only partly replaced with plant proteins, and that are relatively cheap and easy to

501 prepare. Second, the results show that most beef-eaters do not object to eating plant proteins.
502 Almost half of the respondents had established patterns in which beef eating was combined with
503 consuming beans and/or soy products. These respondents can be interpreted to be consumers in a
504 maintenance stage of including plant proteins in their diets, although it is uncertain how often and
505 how much they actually consume plant-based protein. These findings suggest new possibilities for
506 promoting flexitarianism and providing consumers with possibilities to add vegetable proteins to
507 their diets. Promotional campaigns could focus on instructing how to make small and manageable
508 changes in daily food choices, which have been found to be the key to successful dietary changes
509 (Gardner *et al.*, 2012). In the long run, this may also facilitate the acceptability of meat reduction
510 strategies, and encourage people to reflect on the sustainability of their eating patterns.

511 To conclude, the results indicate that in a transformation process towards plant
512 proteins, attention should be paid to the social aspects of eating and the social image of eating
513 particular foods. In terms of public policies, our results suggest that advancing the consumption of
514 plant proteins needs to take advantage of consumers' culturally accepted ideas of healthy and
515 'natural' foods. Moreover, public catering institutions in schools and workplaces could have an
516 important influence by promoting plant proteins in both vegetarian dishes and dishes that combine
517 meat and pulses. The accumulation of these kinds of incremental changes could advance
518 sustainable (and healthier) culinary cultures (Mäkelä & Niva, 2016), which are needed to tackle the
519 environmental load of food production and consumption.

520

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